

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

Danica Petty, et al.,

Plaintiffs, Case Nos. 21-cv-11328, 22-cv-
10809

v.

Judith E. Levy
United States District Judge

Garden City Public Schools, et al.,

Defendants. Mag. Judge Anthony P. Patti

_____/

**OPINION AND ORDER GRANTING PLAINTIFF AMANDA
WILHELM AS NEXT FRIEND OF M.S. DOE’S MOTION TO
APPROVE SETTLEMENT AND FOR PAYMENT OF ATTORNEY
FEES AND COSTS [185]**

Before the Court is Plaintiff Amanda Wilhelm as Next Friend of M.S. Doe’s (“Plaintiff”) Motion to Approve Settlement and for Payment of Attorney Fees and Costs (the “Motion”). (ECF No. 185.) On May 19, 2025, a hearing was held and testimony was taken. For the reasons set forth below and set forth on the record, the Court grants the Motion. (ECF No. 185.)

The Court, having read Plaintiff’s Motion to Approve Settlement and Confidential Exhibit A concerning distribution of settlement

proceeds, having taken testimony from the minor plaintiff's Next Friend in open court, and having been otherwise fully advised;

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the settlement as stated in the Confidential Exhibit A is fair and reasonable and in the best interest of the minor child.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that counsel's request for the distribution of settlement funds, attorney fees and costs applicable to the law firm of Buckfire & Buckfire P.C. is granted.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Probate Attorney Darren Findling's fee in the amount of \$4,000.00 to establish a Special Needs Trust for the minor plaintiff is reasonable and properly paid from the net settlement proceeds payable to the minor plaintiff.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the remaining net balance stated in the Confidential Exhibit A shall be paid into a Special Needs Trust for the benefit of the minor plaintiff, M.S. Doe. That the net settlement proceeds attributable to M.S. Doe will be held in Plaintiff's counsel's IOLTA Account pending receipt of an Order from the appropriate probate court releasing those funds to fund the Special Needs Trust established for the minor plaintiff.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the parent and Next Friend of the minor plaintiff M.S. Doe has authority to sign the release agreement and any other document necessary to effectuate the settlement on behalf of the minor plaintiff M.S. Doe.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this approved settlement between the parties is full and final, that Plaintiff Amanda Wilhelm as Next Friend of M.S. Doe's case against the Defendants shall be dismissed with prejudice and without costs or fees attributed to any of the parties. Accordingly, the Court will issue a judgment and close Case No. 22-cv-10809 pending receipt of an Order from the appropriate probate court pursuant to Michigan Court Rule 2.420.

For the reasons set forth above, the Motion is GRANTED. (ECF No. 185.)

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 22, 2025
Ann Arbor, Michigan

s/Judith E. Levy
JUDITH E. LEVY
United States District Judge

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that the foregoing document was served upon counsel of record and any unrepresented parties via the Court's ECF System to their respective email or First Class U.S. mail addresses disclosed on the Notice of Electronic Filing on May 22, 2025.

s/William Barkholz
WILLIAM BARKHOLZ
Case Manager